

# INTRODUCTION



Now in its fourth year of implementation, the CALFED Bay-Delta Program is a national model of collaborative resource management. This year's annual report documents the tremendous range of activities underway as our state, federal, and local agencies and stakeholders continue to work towards addressing California's most pressing water needs.

In 2004, the Bay-Delta Authority achieved several important milestones:

- After several years of debate, Congress passed legislation authorizing federal participation in the Authority and \$389 million for key program elements over the next six years.
- The Authority adopted a long-term finance plan to serve as the framework for investment decisions in water infrastructure and the environment.
- The Authority adopted the Delta Improvements Package, an integrated set of schedules and actions to ensure that water supply reliability, water quality, and environmental improvements in the Delta move forward in a balanced manner.
- For the fourth consecutive year, the CALFED agencies provided increased flows for threatened and endangered fish through an innovative Environmental Water Account, while also providing regulatory commitments to the state and federal water projects that their supplies would not be interrupted during the year.
- Based on the recommendations of independent panels of national experts, the Authority adopted a comprehensive mercury strategy and a blueprint for improving water measurement and reporting urban and agricultural water supplies.
- And finally, CALFED agencies invested more than \$1.6 billion in local communities to meet the water supply, water quality, levee stability, and environmental goals of the Program.

Of course, water conflicts will always be with us as long as California continues to grow and supplies remain limited. But with a new federal mandate and a finance plan to guide our expenditures, the Authority is now much better positioned to work with our federal, state, and local partners to manage these conflicts and build on our accomplishments in the years ahead.

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